THE END OF THE FIRST DUMA

When the members of the Duma came to the Tauride Palace on July 9, they found it locked and surrounded by troops. Most of the deputies assembled in Viborg, at that time a Finnish city some two hours by train from St. Petersburg, and issued an appeal to the nation. They urged the people to maintain order and at the same time appealed to them to exercise passive resistance to the government and particularly to refuse to pay taxes or give recruits to the army. It was a weak and confused document. Later the Bolsheviks accused the Cadets of having lured the members of the Duma to Viborg to keep them from getting in touch with the people and organizing resistance to the government. There was some truth in this accusation. When the government prosecuted members of the Duma who had signed the Viborg appeal, many Cadets testified that their purpose had been to prevent the revolutionary upheaval that might have resulted from dissolution of the Duma.

St. Petersburg was calm. No demonstrations, no strikes. Reports about the reaction of the people in the provinces were few and vague. And suddenly, like thunder out of a clear sky, came news: Revolt has broken out in Sveaborg, the naval fortress of Helsinki. . . . It is spreading. . . . The mutinous garrison has seized the city. . . . The workers are joining the revolt. . . . Finland's railroads are paralyzed. . . . The rebels are calling on St. Petersburg workers to help them. . . .

Actually, the unrest in Sveaborg had nothing to do with the Duma's dissolution. As in other military riots in Russia at that time, the immediate cause was trivial. Two soldiers were arrested for a minor breach of discipline. When their comrades protested, they too were taken into custody. As protests increased, the High Command decided to arrest the entire company. Other companies of the same regiment overpowered the military police. Then other regiments joined in the riot, and by evening the fortress was in the hands of the rebels. Next, the railroad workers walked out to block the trains transporting troops from St. Petersburg.

The movement spread no further, however. The naval units in the harbor of Sveaborg and the troops stationed outside the fortress did not side with the garrison. On July 20, the navy began to bombard Helsinki, while the Cossacks and foot troops advanced from the mainland. The revolt was crushed before the S-D organization in St. Petersburg decided whether or not to support it.

Just then revolt broke out in Kronstadt. All communication with the fortress was broken off. The St. Petersburg Committee of the

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